

Jewish and Arab Millennials: Holy Spirit Builds Bridges of Peace

Several hundred Messianic Jewish youth together with believing Arab and Palestinian young people gathered for “ELAV 2016” in Jerusalem in August with the focus of “Building An Altar” to the Lord in worship, prayer and encountering the Lord.

A New Wave of ‘On-Fire’ Teenagers

One very obvious and encouraging sign this year was the higher percentage of teenagers present. For the past few years, the “core” of ELAV had been a group of high schoolers who had now matured into young adults. It was great to see them welcoming and ministering to a “new wave” of teenagers this year who are hungry for God.

The Lord led us to organize a four-day Worship Training Camp for youth last June, at the beginning of the summer.

Over 80 Jewish, Arab and Palestinian teenagers attended this camp, sponsored by our friends at Maoz Israel.

The name of the camp was “Dor Haba,” which is Hebrew for “Next Generation.” The teens were taught to lead worship by Israeli musicians and worship leaders, and these teenagers themselves led some very anointed times of worship. The Holy Spirit came in some amazing ways, especially when the young adult staff prayed over the teens to write new worship songs in Hebrew and Arabic.

We then designed the ELAV conference, at the end of the summer, to be a two-day, intensive teen and young adult conference. It was incredibly moving to see so many of the teenagers who had been touched earlier in the summer

worshipping with great abandonment in ELAV.

Some of the older teenagers even led a very anointed worship time in the ELAV conference. There was a strong sense among the leaders that we are witnessing the beginning of a new strong work of the Holy Spirit among the youth in the Land.

A Commitment to Building Altars of Worship

The speakers this year were: Pastor Avi Mizrachi of Tel Aviv; Rania Sayegh of Nazareth; and Rick Ridings of Jerusalem. All three represent houses of prayer in their cities and challenged the young people to build personal places of daily worship and prayer.

But they were also challenged to be part of a weekly coming together with other teenagers even in places without a house of prayer, to find a few friends that would meet weekly to seek the Lord together.

There was a strong response to this call. I was very blessed by a young Arab believer who said to me: "When you said to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show us who to build an altar with, I heard a specific name, and then I felt like the Lord wanted us to do it outside on our rooftop!"

This definitely shows a new boldness and freedom from fear to be willing to worship the Lord where the neighbors can hear.

Deeper Unity Overcoming Ethnic and National Barriers

As this was our 10th National Youth Conference, we saw the gracious fruit of the years of forgiveness and reconciliation between these 800 Jewish, Arab and Palestinian believers in attendance.

It is encouraging to see that many have moved past moments of reconciliation into true friendships, and that they were so glad to be able to be together again in ELAV. There were wonderful scenes of youth from these conflicted backgrounds

praying for each other as true friends.

We even had the visit of a Central American man who is an Ambassador to France and to UNESCO. He said ELAV was the first encouraging news he had heard from the Middle East, and he wanted to come and see with his own eyes if it was true!

He left very touched by the love he saw between the Jewish, Arab, and Palestinian youth. I explained to him that it was not something we were somehow able to produce, but rather the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit during times of worship when the Lord Himself challenged youth to forgiveness and changed their hearts.

We were also very blessed to have believers representing houses of prayer in Egypt, Jordan and Iraq. We had some precious times of fellowship with them. {eoa}

Rick and Patti Ridings, founders of Succat Hallel (24/7 worship and prayer overlooking the Temple Mount in Jerusalem). Find them online at .

To see videos of the speaking and worship sessions, go to .

For the original article, visit .